



# Water Quality NewsFlash

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**LA River and Ballona Cr. TMDLs – Workshop on metals and toxicity** – The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has posted revised versions (3/28/05) of three TMDLs for the Los Angeles River and Ballona Creek. The TMDLs are in the form of proposed Basin Plan Amendments and will be discussed at the April 7 meeting. Formal action is scheduled for the June Board meeting.

The original draft TMDLs were prepared last summer and are summarized in *WQ NewsFlash* 04-31. In comments submitted last August, Caltrans noted that it would cost the Department approximately \$300 million for installing treatment controls for metals on 40% of the Department's contributing drainage area in the LA River watershed (based on lifecycle costs for sand filters; exclusive of land acquisition, engineering, mitigation, etc.) The estimated cost for the Ballona Cr. Metals TMDL was \$45 million. The Caltrans portion of these watersheds is 2% or less.

However, the Board considers these estimates too high. Caltrans estimates were based on actual costs for infiltration trenches and filters installed during the BMP Retrofit Pilot Program (Caltrans, 2004), while the Board staff used cost estimates from U.S. EPA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The revised LA River TMDL, for example, includes two estimates for the entire basin if structural controls are needed - \$1.43 billion and \$1.04 billion using EPA and FHWA estimated unit costs. Annual maintenance costs are estimated at \$153 million (EPA). These estimates are based on a combination of infiltration trenches (12,000 in total) and sand filters. The metals being targeted are lead, copper, cadmium, and zinc.

For the first five years of the metals TMDLs, interim wet-weather waste load allocations will not be interpreted as enforceable permit limits. After five years, however, the interim allocations will be translated into enforceable permit limits. The total implementation period is 15 years.

The third TMDL under consideration is the Ballona Estuary Toxicity TMDL. It is intended to limit pollutant loadings to the *sediments* of the Estuary and focuses on historic pesticides (chlordane, DDT), PCBs (from electrical equipment), PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, from combustion), cadmium, copper, lead, silver, and zinc. It is similar to the metals TMDLs, except that it targets pollutants in sediments rather than pollutants in the water column. It includes allocations for Caltrans. All are posted [http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/html/updates\\_news.html](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4/html/updates_news.html)

The closed portion of the April 7 meeting includes a discussion of the lawsuit against the Board for the Trash TMDL. This TMDL was rejected by a judge in 2003 (See *WQ NewsFlash* 3-47)

**State Storm Water Policy – Listening session comments posted** – The State Water Resources Control Board is developing a policy document to guide implementation of the stormwater program. Earlier this year, Board staff held meetings around the state to identify policy needs related to the program. Interested parties testified and also submitted written comments which are now posted: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormwtr/docs/sw\\_policy\\_comments.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormwtr/docs/sw_policy_comments.pdf)

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, [Betty\\_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov) (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, [fkrieger@msn.com](mailto:fkrieger@msn.com) with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>